

VZCZCXRO7127
RR RUEHAG RUEHDF RUEHIK RUEHLZ RUEHROV
DE RUEHBS #1065 1970939
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 150939Z JUL 08
FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 7692
INFO RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE
RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI 0395

UNCLAS BRUSSELS 001065

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [EWWT](#) [KCRM](#) [KCRS](#) [KJUS](#) [PHSA](#) [PREL](#) [SO](#) [BE](#)
SUBJECT: BELGIUM: SUPPORT FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF UNSCR 1816
(2008) ON SOMALI PIRACY

REF: SECSTATE 74305

¶1. (U) Belgian MFA officials told econoff Belgium supports efforts to protect shipping from piracy off the Somali coast. The officials consider UNSCR 1816 a good resolution and hope useful action results in the next six months and/or the time period will be extended. They noted that France and Spain just made a joint demarche asking for Belgium's support toward a united EU effort to stop the piracy. Officials appreciate the U.S. emphasis on resolving how to handle persons under control. They cite the difficulties France is having trying to find a court to prosecute those they recently took into custody. Under Belgian law, there must be a direct link to a Belgian entity for pirates to be tried in Belgian courts. It would be best to look to the neighboring countries to prosecute and incarcerate. Belgium is more than willing to provide moral support to countries active in interdicting the piracy.

¶2. (SBU) On the issue of providing practical support to interdiction, Belgian Defense and Foreign ministries have taken an informal look at the availability of the country's sole available frigate (the other one is in drydock) in the future. For now, the frigate is promised to UNAFIL, but it might be available to patrol off the Somali coast by late summer 2009 if intervention still would be needed. Officials emphasized no political decision had been made regarding the frigate, but they are looking into options.

FOX

.